



## Guide for Muslim Patient Care in North Lincolnshire



### SCUNTHORPE CENTRAL MOSQUE



## CONTENTS PAGE

Preface	3
A Brief Look at Islam	3
Beliefs	3
<b>A GLANCE AT MUSLIM LIFE</b>	4
The Family	4
Care of the Elderly	4
Human Relations	4
Contraception	4
Embryo Experimentation	5
In-vitro Fertilisation	5
Abortion	5
Divorce	5
Women in Islam	5
Maternity Services	5
The Newborn Child	5
Foster Care	6
Adoption	6
Dress	6
Diet	6
Religious Observance	6/7
The Kaabah	7
Ramadan	7
Fasting	7
How Muslims View Illness	7
Visiting the Sick	7
Gambling	7
<b>ISLAMIC HEALTH PRACTICES</b>	8
Clinical or Nursing Care	8
Medicines Containing Alcohol	8
Modesty	8
Fasting and Medication	8
Touching and Care Provision	8
Hygiene	8/9
Bathing (Ghusl)	9
Ablution (Wudhu) Facility	9
Ablution (Tayammum)	9
<b>END-OF-LIFE CARE</b>	9
For a terminally-ill patient	9
For a patient who has just died	10
Intrauterine Death	10
Grieving and Bereavement	10
Inheritance	10
<b>SPECIFIC CLINICAL SITUATIONS</b>	10
Mental Illness or Intellectual Disabilities	10
Blood Transfusions and Organ Transplant	11
Euthanasia and Suicide	11
Conclusions	11
<b>FOODS</b>	11/12



## Preface

This booklet intends to facilitate health and hospital workers unfamiliar with Islam in their treatment of Muslim patients. It looks at the religious life of observant Muslims, their views on the family, marriage, maternity and birth, as well as dress, diet, fasting, health practices and end-of-life care. Islam is a world-wide religion of about one and a half billion followers, largely represented by two groups, Sunni and Shi'a. There are around two million Muslims living in Britain, which is around 2.7% of the population. However, it is important to differentiate between cultural customs and the Islamic tradition. Also, as with any of the major religions, members will adhere to their religious obligations with varying degrees of emphasis.

## A Brief Look at Islam

Islam places the onus of practicing religion on the individual. Muslims are supported in their faith by learned scholars (Ulama) who have been formally educated in Islamic studies and the Arabic language. Islam means submission and obedience to the will of God. It aims to achieve peace with self and surroundings. Islam consists of six articles of faith and five "fundamental pillars" that distinguish someone as a Muslim.

## Beliefs

A Muslim believes in Allah (God Almighty), the Angels and Prophets of God (from Adam to Jesus and then Muhammad, as the last prophet of God), Books of God (for example, Psalms of David, the Torah, the Bible and the Noble Qur'an), the last day, destiny, and resurrection.

## The Five Fundamental Pillars of Islam

Arabic	English	Description
Shahada	Declaration of Faith	There is no god but Allah, and Muhammed (SAW) is the final messenger
Salaat	Prayers	Praying five times a day, these are specific ritualistic movements and prayers carried out facing towards Makkah
Sawm	Fasting	Abstinence from eating, drinking and sexual intercourse from dawn to sunset during the 9th lunar month (Ramadan)
Zakat	Almsgiving	2.5% of personal wealth given to charity annually.
Hajj	Pilgrimage	Pilgrimage to Makkah once in a life for those physically and financially able



## A GLANCE AT MUSLIM LIFE

### **The Family**

In Islam both sexes are equal. Their roles, of course, are different, as are their biological and psychological needs. The rights of women are equal to those of men, although not necessarily identical. The Qur'an strongly reproaches those who believe women to be inferior to men. In Islamic terms men are appointed protectors over women as they are responsible for providing food, shelter, and clothing for their wives and children.

Marriage is considered a solemn and sacred contract with God. Husbands and wives have definite responsibilities which are complementary to each other. They must show mutual respect at all times.

Benevolence towards parents is expected and the parent-child relationship should be based on mutual love and respect. In Islam, a child has an inalienable right to life and equal chances in life. No discrimination is permitted.

Rules of family living are clearly stated in the Qur'an. Whether parents live together with their children or separately, parents are usually consulted in all decision-making processes.

### **Care of the Elderly**

The elderly in the community should be regarded with deep respect. They should be given priority in all walks of life. The Qur'an strongly advocates the care of the elderly. Therefore, the care of the elderly is regarded as an avenue to Heaven, another expression of worship.

### **Human Relations**

Muslims believe every human being is a member of the universal family. Because of this common bond, there is no room for racial prejudice, social injustice or second-class citizenship. Pre-marital sex and adultery are strictly prohibited. From puberty on, males and females are not allowed to mix freely. All manner of talking, walking, looking, and dressing in public that may instigate temptation, arouse desire, stir suspicion or indicate immodesty and indecency are prohibited. Sexual intercourse is forbidden during menstruation.

Homosexual and lesbian practices are forbidden.

### **Contraception**

Islam recognises that only God has the power to give children to couples. The Pill and barrier methods of contraception are not forbidden but undesirable. Use of these methods must be indicated on medical grounds. The husband and wife practice contraception on the basis of mutual consultation. The rhythm method and coitus interruptus are acceptable. The husband is not allowed to practice coitus interruptus without his wife's permission. Irreversible contraception: tubal ligations and vasectomies are undesirable, for example, are only permissible if the mother's life is threatened. This can also be considered if the patient has extreme physical or mental illness and must be determined by a group of doctors.



### **Embryo Experimentation**

Embryo experimentation is forbidden. This is regarded as tantamount to tampering with God's creation.

### **In-vitro Fertilisation**

In-vitro fertilisation and artificial insemination are permitted provided that the husband's sperm is used. Donor sperm is strictly prohibited.

### **Abortion**

Abortion is not permitted in Islam unless the continuation of the pregnancy threatens the mother's life. The already established life takes precedence over the emerging life. A group of doctors should determine whether the mother's life is threatened.

### **Divorce**

Islam makes provision for divorce by both husband and wife after all attempts at reconciliation have failed. It is considered a grave sin to divorce without significant reason.

### **Women in Islam**

According to the Qur'an men and women are equal and should be treated as such. The Muslim woman has the right to choose her husband. Both are considered equal partners in life. As a wife, she has a right to kind and just treatment by her husband, which she should reciprocate. She has a full right to participate in any decision, domestic or political. She can carry her own surname and does not lose any rights after marriage. She has full rights over the money that she earns. Islam considers the raising of children in a careful manner with discipline to be vital. Hence, the role of the housewife and mother is encouraged and greatly respected.

### **Maternity Services**

A female Muslim should be cared for by females. This is most important during confinement/delivery when strict privacy is essential. Only female health workers should be present with a female patient. Exposure should be kept to a minimum. The position of delivery should be discussed and the woman given the choice. There is no reason, except for personal modesty or embarrassment, that a husband should not be present during childbirth.

### **The Newborn Child**

A newborn child should be bathed or bathing facilities made available to the parents and allow the Call to Prayer to be recited in each ear soon after birth. It is usually done by the father. The practice of male circumcision is usually observed at the early stages of a child's life.



### **Foster Care**

Foster care, especially of orphans, is encouraged provided, the child is allowed to retain the name of the biological parents. If the name is unknown, he/she must be called a brother/sister in faith.

### **Adoption**

Adoption is unacceptable in Islam.

### **Dress**

In general, unless necessary, a Muslim is not allowed to expose his or her body. One may find varying adherence to this dress code depending on the individual and perhaps his or her culture and country of origin. However, in general terms, modesty dictates that a male is not allowed to expose the area between his umbilicus and his knees. A female is required to be covered apart from the hands and face, although a minority of women will cover their faces. The dress rule is applicable in the presence of members of the opposite sex however there is a certain amount of flexibility in the presence of members of the same sex. The Qur'an clearly defines this, and for women also details the family members in front of whom she may appear without her full cover. Muslims generally wear clothing that does not indicate the outline of their bodies. Hospital attire should be provided that meets these requirements, and if not, the patients can be advised to bring some of their own appropriate clothing. A beard is considered important to the Muslim male patient. Like any other patient care, permission must be obtained to shave any part of the beard, which should be done by a man.

### **Diet**

All kitchen staff should be aware that only Halal meat (i.e. meat slaughtered according to religious requirements) must be given to Muslim patients. They should also be made aware that Muslims do not eat pork or any other pig meat and its products, for example, bacon, ham or sausages. A knife used for slicing pork must not be used to cut anything to be given to a Muslim, unless carefully washed. Halal meat is readily available in England. However, if Halal products are not available, Muslims should be given the choice of having seafood, eggs, fruit and vegetables.

(See the FOOD section for a list of approved and forbidden foods).

When serving food or drinks allow for receipt in the right hand. Muslims use the left hand to cleanse themselves after going to the toilet. Therefore when eating, giving or receiving, it is preferable to use the right hand.

### **Religious Observance**

A Muslim prays five times a day at a stated period; at dawn (Fajr), at mid-day (Zuhr), late afternoon (Asr), after sunset (Maghrib), and late evening/night before going to bed (Isha). Prayer is obligatory and usually performed in congregation at a mosque but can also be conducted at home or any place where it is convenient and clean. If possible while in hospital a room should be made available for prayer. The hospital chapel may be used provided no icons are present. A space is required to lay out a prayer mat. An indication of the direction of Makkah (Qibla), roughly south-east in England, should be



evident. This can be marked up in the ward to show the compass direction. In ill-health prayers may be performed while seated or even lying down. Muslims are required to wash (ablution) prior to prayer.

On Fridays, Muslim patients may wish to discharge themselves for approximately an hour for midday (Jummah) prayers which needs to be performed in a congregation. The Muslim patients on this day may also receive a number of hospital visitors above the normal. (See also: Visiting the Sick).

### **The Kaabah**

The Kaabah, "The House of God", is in Makkah, Saudi Arabia and is a cuboid structure the size of a three-storey building first built by Prophet Adam and reconstructed by Prophet Abraham and his son Ishmael. All Muslims face the Kaabah to pray. In England this direction is roughly south-east.

### **Ramadan**

Ramadan is a special month of prayer and religious obligation, specifically fasting - the third pillar of Islam. Fasting in the month of Ramadan is compulsory for all healthy, adult Muslims on reaching puberty. It is the most widely practiced of all Muslim forms of worship. Every individual is responsible for his or her own fast. The start of Ramadan is based on the sighting of the new moon and astronomical calculations. Muslims adhere to the Islamic lunar calendar which is shorter than the Gregorian Calendar by 11 days. This means that the date of Ramadan moves according to the lunar cycle. Fasting begins at dawn and ends at sunset. It is a total fast with abstinence from any food or drink. Abstinence from sexual relations during daylight hours is also required. The usual practice is to have a pre-fast meal (suhour) and a post-fast meal (iftar) after sunset. Smoking is not allowed. Gargling is acceptable as long as fluid is not swallowed. The end of Ramadan is celebrated by a festival of commemoration Eid-ul-Fitr.

### **Fasting**

Pregnant, lactating or menstruating women, the sick and travellers, are exempt from fasting but Islam puts the onus on the individual. A sick person may decide whether to fast, having consulted a physician.

### **How Muslims View Illness**

During illness Muslims are expected to seek God's help with patience and prayers. They should increase their personal reflection on God to obtain peace and seek forgiveness, and give more in charity. They should spend more time reading and listening to the Qur'an. Although they may consider illness as atonement for their sins, Muslims do not consider illness a "punishment" from God. They believe that dying is part of living and an entrance to the next life.

### **Visiting the Sick**

Strong emphasis is placed on the virtues of visiting the sick. This is why many visitors may wish to visit the person in hospital.

### **Gambling**

All forms of games of chance are prohibited in Islam, this would include raffles and sweepstakes.



## **ISLAMIC HEALTH PRACTICES**

### **Clinical or Nursing Care**

It is preferable for a female Muslim to be cared for by females and a male Muslim by males. This is most important during confinement when strict privacy is very essential.

### **Medicines Containing Alcohol**

Where a choice exists, medicines containing alcohol should not be used. In emergency situations, this rule does not apply if an alternate drug is unavailable, but this should be explained to the patient.

### **Modesty**

Effort should be made to modify medical examination techniques so that the patient is exposed as little as possible. In England, great emphasis is placed on modesty: a screen can separate the man/woman at the waist from the examiner performing the examinations which may even include the legs being draped.

### **Fasting and Medication**

Strict adherence to fasting may lead to problems with medication and compliance. Fasting is one of the pillars of Islam. Muslim patients observe fasting unless doctors advise otherwise. The physician/health workers must consult and engage with the patients who wish to fast to ensure adherence, changes and/ or adjustments can then be made to a drug regime to allow for this.

### **Touching and Care Provision**

Unnecessary touching between non-related people of opposite sexes should be avoided. If possible, patients should be cared for by a person of the same sex.

### **Hygiene**

Cleanliness is considered a very important part of the Islamic faith. Washing facilities (a simple plastic container) should be made available in the ward and in the toilets for ambulant patients to wash his or her private parts.

For in-patients who are bedridden, special care should be taken with cleanliness, especially with discharges, urine, stools, and bleeding from any orifice, bearing in mind that the patient may wish to pray in bed. A beaker or flask of water should be made available to bedridden Muslim patients whenever they use a bed pan. Bed baths must be given by members of the same sex. Cultural awareness and personal preferences should be considered before a bed bath, or any other aspect of hygiene care, the nurse should acknowledge the patient's preferences. Privacy and dignity are paramount when assisting a patient with his or her hygiene needs.

Bed bathing is a personal and intrusive procedure, and the patient may feel embarrassed or even frustrated relying on someone else to meet his or her intimate needs. Basic methods of maintaining privacy and dignity include; covering patients with a sheet or towel while they are being washed so that no part of the body is left exposed.



Taking care to ensure that any curtains around bed areas are closed properly and that there are no gaps through which other people can see. Trying to prevent other people, staff or visitors from entering the room during bed bathing. It is important that all members of staff respect patient privacy and dignity. If the curtains surrounding a bed are closed or the door to the patient's room is closed, staff should ask if they can enter before doing so, either by knocking on the door or asking the person behind the curtain.

Hand washing before and after meals is particularly important to Muslims. Washing facilities should be made available to bedridden patients at meal times.

### **Bathing (Ghusl)**

Washing the entire body in accordance with the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad. It is necessary to have ghusl after seminal emission, at the end of menstruation and after childbirth and before burial. It is necessary to be in the state of ghusl or wudhu before one performs the salaah or holds a copy of the Qur'an. Ghusl is a purification inwardly and outwardly. Muslims prefer to wash in running water for bathing purposes i.e. would prefer a shower to a bath. A bucket and jug would also serve the purpose.

### **Ablution (Wudhu) Facility**

An Ablution is the term used for ritual washing. Ablution must be carried out before making prayers or touching the Qur'an. It takes the form of washing the hands; gargling; rinsing the mouth and nostrils; washing the face; the arms; passing wet hands over the hair; and lastly washing the feet. All mosques have a special area where a person can carry out the Ablution. This facility is purpose built and takes into account the need to wash the feet, hence seating is usually lower. A normal wash hand basin is adequate for performing the Ablution but a person may need help if they are frail and elderly or weak. Once one has done wudhu, one remains in wudhu until it is nullified at which time they will have to perform it again.

### **Ablution (Tayammum)**

A form of purification for prayer using dust, earth or stone, when water for ghusl or wudhu is either unavailable or would be detrimental to health. Tayammum is performed by striking the earth with the palms of the hands and lightly wiping the face and forearms. Other relevant issues of cleanliness include the removal of pubic and axillary hair, a Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad, and the washing of the relevant parts of the body after emptying the bladder and bowel.

## **END-OF-LIFE CARE**

### **For a terminally-ill patient**

If a patient is in coma, it is preferred that the face of the patient be turned to face Makkah, i.e. roughly south-east in England. It is important for Muslims to recite the Qur'an or prayers in front of the patient or in a room close by. The relatives should be invited to pray if they wish. The hospital chapel may be used for prayers, provided no icons are present. Access to a religious leader should be made available, if not already arranged by the relatives. A family member may wish to remain with the patient at all times, if appropriate medically.



### **For a patient who has just died**

The face of the deceased should preferably be turned towards Makkah. The face, and indeed, the whole body of the deceased must be covered by a sheet. The body must be handled as gently as possible. Muslims believe that the soul remains close to the body until burial. The body must be handled with utmost respect only by a person of the same sex. Relatives may wish to pray close to the body or in a room close by. Islam permits a post-mortem examination for sound reason, but the statutory laws of the country must be followed. The body should not be washed unless necessary. Islamic washing of the body is done before burial (Ghusl). If no relatives are available, the Scunthorpe Central Mosque should be contacted. Muslim burials are performed as soon as possible after death, sometimes on the same day.

Give the family a copy of **A Practical Guide for Bereaved Muslims fulfilling both Governmental and Islamic requirements for North Lincolnshire** which can be found on the Goole and Scunthorpe Hospital Trusts intranet site under end of life care or on the internet for NLG trusts site under Services and then Chaplaincy (Muslim funeral guide)

### **Intrauterine Death**

A miscarriage or an intrauterine death occurring more than 120 days after conception would require burial, as a foetus after that time is regarded as a viable baby. Such foetuses should therefore be given to the parents for proper burial. The foetus is given a name before burial.

### **Grieving and Bereavement**

Death is seen as something predestined by God. It is only the beginning of eternal life. The more pious families may thus appear inappropriately calm and accepting by Western standards. In Islam, a widow may marry after four months and ten days, during which time she must have at least one menstruation. This is to ensure that she is not pregnant. A pregnant widow may remarry if 42 days has elapsed since the birth of her child. This child must bear the name of the deceased. The outward show of grief in the form of chest banging or wailing is forbidden.

### **Inheritance**

The disposal of a deceased's estate is detailed in the Qur'an.

## **SPECIFIC CLINICAL SITUATIONS**

### **Mental Illness or Intellectual Disabilities**

A person diagnosed as having a mental illness, or a profound intellectual disability, is absolved from all the obligatory requirements in Islam. For instance, obligatory prayer, fasting or pilgrimage are not required. In the first instance the family, if any, is responsible for the patient. If this is not possible, his or her care becomes the responsibility of the State.



### **Blood Transfusions and Organ Transplant**

Blood transfusions and transplants of various human organs are acceptable in Islam. Decisions about organ transplants are made on an individual basis and certain conditions have to be fulfilled.

### **Euthanasia and Suicide**

Euthanasia and suicide are forbidden in Islam. Euthanasia is regarded as murder by the person who is performing it and suicide by the person ending his/her life.

### **Conclusions**

Health care professionals should adopt a system of "sensible awareness" with regard to Islamic belief and practice. This requires a holistic assessment of a patient's cultural and religious beliefs to ensure the safe implementation of sensitive and appropriate health care for a positive health outcome. Strengthening links with the local community and personnel familiarisation with the Islamic culture will enhance the best possible practice. An essential aspect of health care is the health care providers role in understanding the concerns of the patient and family and communicating these concerns to all those involved in the decision-making process. The principles of sanctity of life, alleviation of suffering, respect for the patient's autonomy while achieving the best medical treatment without harm, and always being honest and truthful in giving information, apply equally to all. Such equality remains a principle tenet of Islam.

## **FOODS**

General dietary choices for Muslim patients:

### **MEAT AND SUBSTITUTES**

**APPROVED (HALAL)** Chicken, beef, lamb killed by Muslim slaughter men

Most seafood, Eggs cooked in water, butter, vegetable margarine or vegetable oil

Dried beans and lentils, baked beans.

**FORBIDDEN (HARAM)** Pork and all pig products (bacon, ham, salami)

### **MILK AND MILK PRODUCTS.**

**APPROVED** Milk, yogurt, cheese, ice cream made without animal fat.

**FORBIDDEN** Ice cream made with animal fat.

### **FRUIT AND VEGETABLES**

**APPROVED** All fruit or vegetables raw, dried, canned or cooked using water, vegetable fats or butter.

**FORBIDDEN** Any fried or roasted in lard or dripping.



#### BREAD AND CEREALS

**APPROVED** All breakfast cereals. Bread, cakes and biscuits prepared without animal fat other than butter (Read labels). Rice cooked without animal fat, pasta.

#### FATS AND OILS

**APPROVED** Butter, vegetable margarine, olive oil, peanut oil, vegetable oils

**FORBIDDEN** Lard, dripping, suet, other animal fats (except butter) and any foods made with or cooked in them

#### BEVERAGES

**APPROVED** Tea, coffee, water, fruit juices, soft drinks, mineral and soda water, Cordials

**FORBIDDEN** Alcohol and foods cooked with alcohol e.g. trifles, puddings, sauces

#### SOUPS

**APPROVED** Any made without pork, ham or animal fats

**FORBIDDEN** Any with ham bone stock

#### DESSERTS

**APPROVED** Any without alcohol, lard, dripping or suet, for example fruit-based, custards, tofu ice cream or sherbet, puddings made with butter or vegetable margarine, egg dishes, rice dishes

**FORBIDDEN** Any with alcohol, lard, suet dripping, ice cream with animal fat

#### MISCELLANEOUS

**APPROVED** Coconut milk, spices, including chilli, curry powder, pickles, chutneys

**FORBIDDEN** Pork product, Vanilla essence (alcohol base)

**PLEASE NOTE FOR MUSLIM INPATIENTS THERE IS A MUSLIM INPATIENTS GUIDE NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE AVAILABLE ON THE NLG TRUST WEBSITE.**